



NEWS RELEASE

BJVA02:13

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, January 28, 2002

Contact: Alfie Charles
Shad Balch
916/653-6575

Voter Registration Week Gets Underway With Registration Drives Across California

*Californians Will Have Numerous Opportunities to Register Prior to February 19th Deadline;
Jones Announces New Toll-Free Number to Explain New Primary Rules to Independent Voters*

SACRAMENTO --- With the February 19th deadline to register for the March 5, 2002 primary election rapidly approaching, Secretary of State Bill Jones announced the launch of this year's Voter Registration Week, a series of non-partisan activities designed to provide ample opportunities for Californians to register to vote throughout the week.

"During the next seven days, Californians will have the opportunity to register to vote as they go about their daily lives – where they work, where they shop, where they go to school and where they play," said Jones, who has conducted a full week of nonpartisan statewide voter registration drives since 1996.

"After the tragic attacks against our country and our democracy, it is up to all of us to register and vote in honor of those who have given their lives for our country and can no longer exercise this precious right of citizenship – the right to vote," said Jones. "As part of our ***Vote America*** campaign, we are encouraging all Californians to do their part by signing up for our *Take Five and Vote* program. If each Californian pledges to "Take Five" five friends, family members, coworkers or neighbors and help them register and get them to the polls to vote, we can achieve our goal of 100 percent voter participation.

To encourage voter registration and participation, Jones will be working with thousands of public and private sector partners to provide potential voters with the opportunity to register to vote before the February 19, 2002 deadline. ***Vote America*** Voter Registration Week Partners include some of the state's leading grocery stores, small businesses, large corporations, industry trade associations, dry cleaners, bookstores, Rock-The-Vote, the World Wrestling Federation and more.

-more-

A Project of the
California Secretary of State

BILL JONES
California Secretary of State
VOTE AMERICA CHAIR

VOTE AMERICA CO-CHAIRS

JOHN BURTON
President Pro Tem
California State Senate

JAMES L. BRULTE
Senate Republican Leader
California State Senate

ROBERT HERTZBERG
Speaker of the Assembly
California State Assembly

DAVE COX
Assembly Republican Leader
California State Assembly

JAMES K. HAHN
Mayor
City of Los Angeles

DON KNABE
Supervisor
County of Los Angeles

HERB WESSON
Speaker-Elect of the Assembly
California State Assembly

The themes for each day of Voter Registration Week are:

- *Monday, January 28th -- Kick-Off of the week's events at the State Capitol*
- *Tuesday, January 29th -- Grocer's Day*
- *Wednesday, January 30th -- Education Day*
- *Thursday, January 31st -- Business/Technology Day*
- *Friday, February 1st -- Entertainment Day*
- *Saturday, February 2nd -- Family Day*
- *Sunday, February 3rd -- Sports Day*

The goal of ***Vote America*** is to provide every eligible voter with the opportunity to be a part of America and help protect democracy at its very core – the ballot box. In addition to registering voters, educating voters, and encouraging voter turnout, ***Vote America*** is also a volunteer recruitment program, asking voters to serve as pollworkers, host a polling place and more. Relying heavily on the combined efforts of the private sector, traditional voting and civic organizations, ***Vote America*** is continuously seeking new partners to help spread the word about getting involved in Democracy.

For more information about voter registration and voting, please visit the ***Vote America*** web site at www.voteamerica.ca.gov or the Secretary of State's web site at www.ss.ca.gov.

Jones also urged voters to become familiar with the new changes in the way the primary election will be conducted this March 5th in California. This year will mark the fourth change in primary rules in the last four statewide primary elections.

Under the new modified primary structure, partisan voters (those voters who have chosen to affiliate with a qualified political party) will only be permitted to vote for candidates in their own political party. Voters who decline to state a party affiliation on their voter registration card will be permitted to cast either a non-partisan ballot or may select a partisan ballot from one of the four political parties who have passed rules that permit independent voters to vote in their party's primary elections. The parties who have opened their primaries to unaffiliated voters are the Democratic, Republican, American Independent and Natural Law parties.

For more information about the state's new primary election rules, voters are encouraged to call the state's toll free number 1-866-387-8683 (1-866-DTS-VOTE).